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COVID-19 Quarantine Guidance
Critical Infrastructure Employee Exception (Updated 1/25/22)

During surges of COVID-19 infections, staff who are quarantined (exposed but not infected) at home and isolated due to infection at home reduce the workforce needed to maintain critical infrastructure. In order to maintain operation of this critical infrastructure, some staff and employees may need to be deemed essential workers and be permitted to continue to work safely during quarantine. To accomplish this, any individual deemed an essential worker must wear a highly protective mask (well-fitted medical mask) or respirator (KN-95 or N-95) at all times when in a room with others to protect those around them and stop working if they develop any COVID-19 symptoms.

This exception only applies to employees without symptoms in quarantine, not in isolation. If an individual tests positive for COVID-19 or has symptoms compatible with COVID-19 and is untested, they should isolate away from others. Isolation guidance can be accessed [here](#). Under normal circumstances, individuals who have been exposed to COVID-19 and are not up-to-date on COVID-19 vaccination and/or have not had a recent COVID-19 infection (last 90 days) are required by public health to quarantine. Quarantine guidance can be accessed [here](#). The critical infrastructure employee exception to quarantine only applies to individuals directed to quarantine.

To qualify for the critical infrastructure employee exception and continue to come to work in person during their quarantine period (10 full days from their last exposure to COVID-19), an individual must meet all of the following criteria:

- Work in one of the following critical infrastructure sectors, or in support of one of these sectors AND
- Be identified by their employer as essential AND
- Remain without symptoms throughout the entire 10-day quarantine period AND
- Wear a highly protective mask or respirator (surgical mask, KN95 or N-95) at all times when in a room with others for the entire 10-day quarantine period.

Critical Infrastructure Sectors:

For a complete listing of critical infrastructure jobs see CISA Guidance

- Healthcare*/Public Health
- Funeral and Mortuary Services
- Law Enforcement, Fire, Public Safety, and Other First Responders
- Education
- Child Care
- Food and Agriculture (not including commercial food service, e.g. restaurants)
- Energy
- Water and Wastewater
- Transportation and Logistics
- Public Works and Infrastructure Support Services
- Community or Government Based Operations and Essential Functions
- Critical Manufacturing
- Hazardous Materials
- Chemical
- Defense Industrial Base
- Residential/Shelter Facilities, Housing, and Related Services
- Information Technology and Information Security
- Hygiene Products and Services

*Complete guidance on work restrictions for healthcare providers with COVID-19 infection or exposures can be found here.

During quarantine, excepted individuals should follow quarantine guidance as usual in all settings other than at work.

If at any time during the quarantine period an individual develops symptoms of COVID-19 they should isolate, test and follow isolation guidance.

Individuals who are up-to-date on COVID-19 vaccination or have had a COVID-19 infection in the past 90 days do not have to quarantine and are not subject to this exception. They can continue to work but should wear a mask for 10 days following their last exposure per CDC and MCDPH quarantine guidance. They should monitor for symptoms and isolate and test for COVID-19 if they develop symptoms.

In areas of high community transmission, all individuals are recommended to wear face masks in public, indoor spaces and crowded outdoor spaces.